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THE GATEWAY



Well, now, it looks like we've got a complex love triangle going on here.



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A bird's-eye view of eccentricity

Thunderbirds Are Now!

With You Say Party! We Say Die!
Thursday, 5 October at 8pm
The Powerplant

KIM MISUTKA
Arts & Entertainment Staff

If Thunderbirds Are Now! were to describe their live show, it most likely would be represented by an exclamation point.

The Detroit-based rockers are clearly fond of expressive punctuation, as their moniker attests, and according to lead singer Ryan Allen, the exclamation point results when you combine living in the moment with wanting to be both exciting and entertaining.

"We have the worst band name ever, so I don't even know what [the exclamation point] means anymore," Allen yells into the phone, his voice sounding both high-pitched and caffeine-drenched. "Yeah, I don't know; it was appropriate at the time. It's more fitting than calling us 'The Shittiest Band Ever' with an exclamation point at the end, but maybe not. Maybe some people will disagree with that."

The Thunderbirds are, indeed, a little bit kooky when in conversation, but it doesn't stop there: the band's records are even more intense, if that's in anyway possible. With the October release of their new album, *Make History*, Thunderbirds hope to continue doing what they do best: make music that could withstand the shackles of normality and time.

"I feel like a lot of bands just make a record of that year and then it's like, 'Oh that was really good like a year ago, but I never really listen to it anymore.' It would be cool to revisit this in ten years and see if it actually holds



up. Whether or not we succeeded, I don't know, but at least we tried. We're just here making weird music."

Make History is different than their previous albums, partly due to the fact that there are new members in the band. The swapping of people has, unsurprisingly, also impacted the Thunderbirds' sound.

"[The new album] isn't as dance-oriented," Allen says. "It's not as much of a party record—maybe like an after-party record, but I don't know. It's a little bit more cerebral as far as the lyrics are concerned. The songs have a little more meaning to them, I guess. It's more erotic and more of a pop record. And we're not embarrassed of that at all."

However, there is something Allen's embarrassed about, lyric-wise: an earlier album's song about masturbation. Allen says that when Thunderbirds were first starting out, they weren't trying to be serious. However, all the fun caught up with them later.

"The price comes along when you feel like you want to have something

to say," Allen says. "You want to try and convey an idea or emotion or an opinion, and writing a song about Internet porn is probably not the way to go."

Although Allen says Thunderbirds Are Now! would never play that song again, he does explain it was a tool for growth.

"Our band wouldn't have had place to evolve from if we didn't start like that, so I'm not really ashamed of it," Allen says.

Thunderbirds have been touring a lot throughout the past year and are excited to play in Canada. Like their goals to progress as a band, they can't wait to play somewhere new, and more importantly, somewhere affiliated with the moniker City of Champions.

"The Edmonton Oilers were good in the '80s, and I heard that we're a new wave band," Allen explains. "So, I'm sure new wave was really hot when the Oilers were hot. So, if you put all that shit together, it's going to make for one killer show."

Dropping their anchor for charity

Line Atlantic

With Circle Square and Veil Maker
Wednesday, 4 October at 8:30pm
New City Likwid Lounge

JASKARAN SINGH
Arts & Entertainment Writer

It's not always easy to take bands seriously, especially when their music and sense of humour suggest a degree of pretentiousness and superficiality. However, in the case of Edmonton-based quintet Line Atlantic, the old clichéd statement about the reservation of pre-emptive judgment is undoubtedly applicable.

Three of Line Atlantic's members are named Jeff—Big Jeff (guitarist), Medium Jeff (drums) and Little Jeff (bass)—and in addition to that, their latest demo, "Boondock Solstice," is an intricately meshed, full-sounding six-piece orchestration that fools listeners into believing that The Line Atlantic probably convey a sense of undeserved confidence.

But after speaking with the sextet in their studio, and finding out that they're planning to use their time in the limelight to support a good cause, it's clear that their outward ostentation is nothing to judge them by.

"New City has these DIY Wednesday nights, and they use it to promote local bands. And it's free, with no cover at the door," Big Jeff says. "[New City] asked us and a few other bands to play, so since it was a free show, we decided to turn it into something with a purpose."



ABANDON SHIP The Line Atlantic leave the comfort of their studio for charity.

in the boondies.

"I would say a lot of the songs [we write] are something you can relate to," Big Jeff continues. "Boondock Solstice" is a song about your friends who are always there for you, no matter what, and about people passing through life ... so I think if [the audience] can relate to what we're saying, it's even better."

And when it comes down to the purpose of their show at New City, the group is able to come to a consensus and speak passionately about their goals.

"We don't have to worry about the social consciousness getting to our heads," Cech says. "One may be worried that the band will become pre-occupied with being heroes and flag wavers rather than playing gigs, à la U2. Our first priority is playing as a tight band; music is what comes first."



Off to the glue factory

Equus, the Citadel's season opener, fails to take audiences on a galloping ride

Equus

Directed by James MacDonald
Starring Tom Wood
Runs until 15 October
Citadel Theatre

AMANDA ASH
Arts & Entertainment Editor

A boy stands onstage, clothed in darkness, with a large, magnanimous animal resting its head gently on his shoulder. The two are frozen in time, in a queer, yet strangely empathetic position, the boy's hand trickling down the beast's chest as he gazes lovingly into two large, red eyes.

This is the opening scene of *Equus*, the Citadel Theatre's first production of the season. Director James MacDonald—who has recently become the Citadel's new Associate Artistic Director—summarizes the relationship between a boy and a horse in the first few minutes of passionate stillness, while red lights and shadows splatter across the stage, creating a resonating image of worship.

However, although the play's inception encompasses what the entire performance stands for—the power of love and the intensity of devotion—something gets lost in translation as the play progresses. Much of *Equus'* subject matter is indisputably powerful, but when it comes to the actual performances and set design, the choices fail to click.

Alan Strang (Anthony Johnston), a stable boy, blinds six horses and must

be admitted into a psychiatric clinic under the aid of Dr Martin Dysart (Tom Wood). As the story progresses, audiences discover that the boy has transferred his worship of God onto one of the horses he's cared for.

When Alan and Jill Mason (Anastasia Phillips), another girl working at the stables, edge towards hitting the hay together, Alan becomes hysterical as his God—the horse—witnesses his sacrifice.

Audiences do, undoubtedly, acquire the sense that everything has become bleak in comparison to Alan's experience, but that perception simply functions to draw spectators away from the performance rather than into it.

The script itself makes a fine point about the mundane, concrete reality we live in each and every day, arguing that Alan's passion—no matter how psychologically unhealthy it may be—is less mad than the commonplace rituals we perform. However, once that first intimate moment between him and the horse becomes replaced with

bright lighting and a set that resembles an operating room, stable and courtroom all at once, MacDonald instigates a sharp disconnect by whitewashing the emotive responses previously experienced.

In general, *Equus* evolves a feeling of sterility, of empty, passionless banality—a choice MacDonald makes that isn't altogether wrong, but less effective than the earthiness of the first scene. Audiences do, undoubtedly, acquire the sense that everything has become bleak in comparison to Alan's experience, but that perception simply functions to draw spectators away from the performance rather than into it.

Just as the set design strays along an unsuccessful path, so does the acting. Considering the demands placed on the actors—such as when Johnston and Phillips are required to undress themselves completely onstage in order to re-enact the final moments before Alan blinds the horses—there's definitely a challenge set out for them, but in their case, overacting shoves subtlety off to the side. Similarly, Wood performs his character with a little too much drama, contributing to *Equus'* aura of fictitiousness.

Equus encounters a few directorial choices that dilute much of the script's potency, especially when audiences are provoked with such an astonishing introductory scene. Considering it's only the season opener, though, hopefully the Citadel can avoid being thrown into the barn by using *Equus* as an example to work from.

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FLOOD MY FIELD, BABY Fields to Flood performed at the Powerplant on Saturday to promote their latest album.

SPORTS

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Puck Bears take share of Brick title

Alberta offers low APR financing and no injuries or losses until 2007 while splitting the tournament title with the Thunderbirds

MIKE KENDRICK
Design & Production Editor

After taking a hard loss to division rivals the Saskatchewan Huskies in last year's Brick Invitational tournament, the Golden Bears hockey team came out for a hard-hitting series this weekend to win a pair of games and tie with UBC as tournament victors.

On Friday night, the Bears faced the Huskies in a physical battle that ended in a close 4-3 victory for the Green and Gold. First-year Alberta forward Ian MacDonald opened up the scoring, acting on a quick opportunity midway through the first. Fellow rookie Kyle Fecho notched an insurance marker early in the second. Saskatchewan retaliated, however, with first-year Brett Novak's goal, which sent the Huskies into the third period with a one-goal deficit.

Both teams brought the pressure in the third as Alberta's Tim Krymusa put the Bears up 3-1 on the power play, only to have the Huskies respond with two goals of their own. With only a minute-and-a-half left in the game, Veteran Bears sharpshooter Ben Kilgour took advantage of the chaos in front of the net to pop in the game-winning goal.

"You can't take those lazy penalties that let a team back in," head coach Eric Thurston said of Friday's game. "No matter what the score is, you keep working ... we always find a way to win. It doesn't matter if it's going to be the first minute or the last minute. We've got to find a way to win, and we did that."

Saturday's game against the Lethbridge Pronghorns was more slanted on the scoreboard, but was just as physical from both teams. The Bears came out with a 4-1, win and took advantage of



PETE YEE

WHERE MOMMA KEEPS THE COOKIE JAR When the Bears weren't on a parade to the penalty box, they were snapping shot towards the top of the net.

a weak forecheck from the Pronghorns who were confined mostly to their own end. Bears rookies Jesse Gimblett and MacDonald added a couple of goals to the tally and looked as sharp as their experienced linemates.

Penalties were aplenty in both games, with nearly 60 minutes worth handed out on each nights. Most of the calls were obstruction since CIS has adopted NHL-style officiating this year.

Bears captain Harlan Anderson,

who scored first in Saturday's game, felt that with the new rules, it'll take time for teams to adjust their play.

"I think everybody just has to remember that you've got to play the puck every time you use your stick, instead of going after the guy's stick and after the guy's hands, because you're gonna get called for that. I think we're adjusting pretty good. We're taking a few too many penalties, but once we iron that out, we'll be good,"

he said.

While this weekend was a test for experienced players, it also served to build chemistry with the new faces on the team. The Bears have seen a drastic change in roster this season, and are still adjusting to their new look.

"Every time you lose ten guys and replace them with nine, it's gonna be a different adjustment," Thurston said. "It's going to take a while. We played the Oiler rookies and the other two

games, so this is basically our fourth game. It takes a lot longer to adjust, but unfortunately we have one more game [Saturday's win over Lethbridge] and we get thrown right in to the regular season."

The Thunderbirds also downed Saskatchewan 4-2 and Lethbridge 2-1 to tie the Bears for the tournament title. Bears Tim Krymusa, Ben Kilgour and Harlan Anderson were named tournament all-stars.

Bears jonesing for a guard after Tyson breaks foot

ROBIN COLLUM
Sports Staff

For the Bears basketball team, it's another season, and another key player on the injury list. This time it's fifth-year guard Tyson Jones who was sidelined after he broke his foot at practice earlier this month.

The incident happened during a routine practice drill on Jones' birthday. He will be in a plastic boot cast for at least two weeks, and likely won't be seen in a game until mid-November.

"I was doing a three-on-three full-court press drill and switched direction pretty quickly. I felt a pop in my foot and tried to walk it off," Jones, a Winnipeg native, explained. "And all of a sudden I couldn't walk on it."

Jones' break follows what's starting to seem like a tradition for the Bears. Last year, they lost the services of Phil Sudol to a persistent anterior cruciate ligament injury (ACL), and the year before that saw Scott Gordon temporarily out of the lineup with a broken bone in his hand—an injury that was also suffered during a practice.

"It's funny, because we'd had a discussion the day before [my injury] after morning practice," Jones said. "Horwood was reflecting on past seasons and was like, 'Maybe this will

be the one year where we don't get a major injury.' I knocked on wood three times, but obviously it didn't work."

Both Jones and Bears head coach Don Horwood insist that the team will be able to adjust to the guard's absence from the roster, though they're hoping for a quick recovery.

"Ours is a very well-balanced team, so with me being out of the lineup, I don't think the team will suffer at all," Jones said. "We have a lot of guys who can score, a lot who can defend, a lot who can rebound. I think our team will be good."

"He'll only miss a few games, so it's really not that bad for the team," Horwood added. "It's mostly just bad for Tyson. He'd been working on his game a lot this summer, and I know he was really excited to go out there and show what he could do."

Jones, who averaged 5.8 points and 2.9 rebounds per game led the team in assists with 3.9 per game last season, tenth in the conference. He was also seventh in the conference in assist/turnover ratio and was expected to see increased playing time with the graduation of some veterans from last year's squad. He certainly has plenty to be disappointed about.

"It's very frustrating," Jones said.

"During the summer, you work on your game and conditioning, because you want to come back in peak shape and contribute as much as you can to the team. When you get an injury you have to start all over again, and all that hard work you did during the summertime is gone to waste."

To keep in shape, Jones is doing upper body and abdominal work with the team trainers and hopes to be able to progress to running and active drills soon after his cast is removed. He's anxious to make the transition back into CIS-level play as smooth as possible, both in terms of fitness and cohesion with the team. His coach is sure that the fact that Jones is a veteran will help him get back into the game.

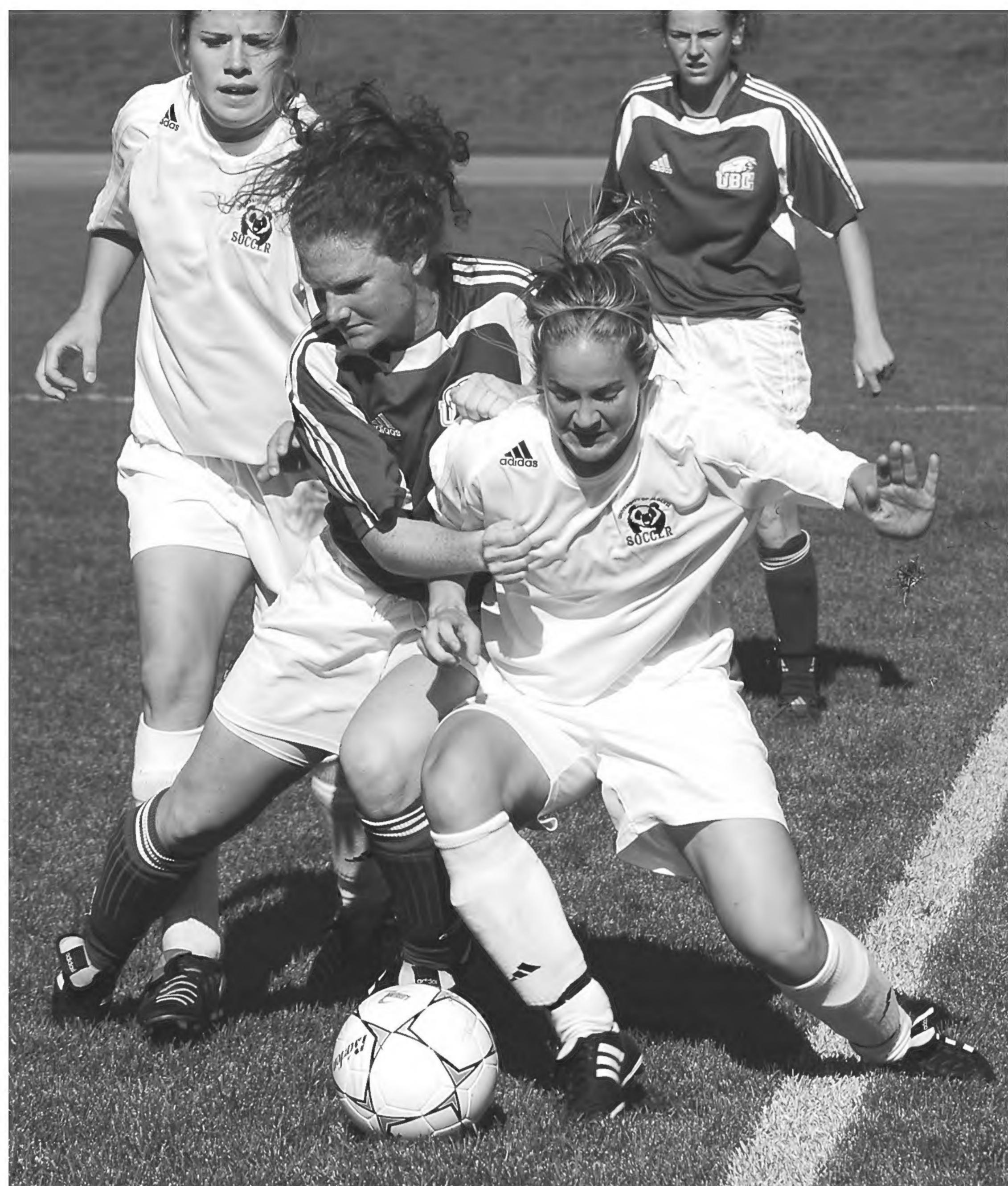
"The team goes through rigorous training for a month, running twice a day, and I'm here on the sidelines doing sit-ups and push-ups," Jones lamented. "It's going to take a few games to get back in, and maybe three weeks of practice just to get back in game shape."

"It's a real advantage that he's in his fifth year, because he already knows all our systems," Horwood said. "If he were a first-year player, [not playing in the pre-season] would be huge; it would probably mean a lost season."



MIKE OTTO

THAT COULD DO SOME DAMAGE Tyson Jones will be out for a few weeks.



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PURPLE PURPLE The Pandas fought off some tight defence from UBC to come away with a win on Saturday afternoon.

Pandas escape tough weekend with split

ANDREW RENFREE
Sports Staff

When the final whistle blew for the Pandas soccer squad on Saturday afternoon, the score didn't correlate with the play on the field for the previous 90 minutes. Somehow Alberta defied logic and the laws of sports as they defeated the UBC Thunderbirds 1-0, despite being outplayed for much of the match.

UBC controlled the ball for the majority of the game and had possession longer than Alberta did. The T-birds had more scoring chances too, creating several tense moments in front of Alberta keeper Caitlin Schmidt, as Pandas' defenders scrambled to get the ball out of their own end. UBC also had nine corner kicks while Alberta had none, but the Thunderbirds just couldn't finish, and left Foote Field on the losing end of a shutout.

"It's fantastic that we managed to come away with three points," Pandas head coach Liz Jepsen noted after the game Saturday. However, she was quick to add that she wasn't surprised her squad came away with the win.

"It was a real battle like I thought it would be, but we can compete with any team—it's a matter of whether or not we put it on the field. It wasn't necessarily the prettiest soccer, but it's about the three points at the end of the day. I'd rather see better soccer and we have to be more composed in order to get that."

The lone Alberta goal came during

the 27th minute on one of Alberta's few offensive chances in the UBC zone. Alberta midfielder Natalie Swain fired a free kick, which Jackie Smith headed past T-birds' keeper Jaclyn Dunnett. It was Smith's first goal of the season and all Alberta would need to get the win.

"Soccer is about strikes on net and strikes in net—with strikes in net we beat them there right, and that's what matters," Jepsen said.

UBC head coach Dick Mosher was frustrated that his team had the advantage of much of the game but still went home empty-handed.

"I thought we played well; we just gave up one chance and [Alberta] scored on it," Mosher said. "We had four or five half-chances [to score] and maybe two or three good ones but our lack of finish killed us. But that's what the game's all about, isn't it? Finish the ball, and we're not doing it."

On Sunday afternoon, the Pandas took on defending CIS champion Victoria Vikes and looked to rebound from some of their defensive blunders the previous day. Alberta played a strong first half, containing Victoria's potent offence to the midfield. At the end of the first half Alberta had a 1-0 lead, after forward Amy Ciezki made a single-handed effort and put the ball top-shelf in the 31st minute.

Victoria came out strong in the second half however, and took advantage of two Alberta defensive breakdowns to take a 2-1 lead, scoring twice before ten minutes had gone by in the second half. The Pandas had

many stellar chances in the latter part of the game: dribbling the ball past the Vikes' keeper in the 66th minute, hitting the post in minute 79 and forcing the Victoria keeper to make a great save in the 81st minute. None of these chances resulted in goals, however, and Victoria went on to win 2-1.

"That was a great soccer game. You walk off the pitch and there's nothing short there," Jepsen noted after Sunday's game. "We did a good job, we battled well, but [Victoria] did a good job playing defensive for the whole second half and managed to come out on top."

"It was a very, very competitive game. I thought both teams defended well, and it was a pretty even, tight game," Victoria head coach Tracy David added.

Victoria still hasn't lost all season and will likely maintain their rank as top squad in CIS this week. Jepsen, however, pointed out that the Pandas are comparable to the Vikes and anticipates facing them in the playoffs.

"It's even-steven between the two teams, definitely. We look forward to seeing them in Canada West," she said. "They're a fantastic team and I don't want to take away anything from them, but I believe we're the best team in CIS."

"We've got a long ways to go before Canada West finals talk," David added. "But U of Alberta is a very good team, and if they keep going the way they're going, they're certainly going to be in that [Canada West] championship."



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ERINNE FENWICK

CHASING THE VIKES Victoria (white) is the class of CIS soccer, but the rest of Canada West isn't far behind them.

West is best in CIS soccer

ROSS PRUSAKOWSKI
Sports Staff

Though they hardly seemed it when they strode onto Foote Field this weekend, the two dozen players that make up the University of Victoria Vikes weren't women: they were giants.

For the past four years, the Vikes and their compatriots from the left coast, the University of British Columbia Thunderbirds and Trinity Western University Spartans, have combined to capture every Canada West and CIS soccer title available. Considering that UVic is currently undefeated and is the top-ranked team in the nation, it's likely that they'll continue BC's stranglehold on CIS women's soccer. It's a dominance that Tracey David, Victoria's head coach, is at a loss to explain.

"I think we have a good player pool, but so does Alberta—Alberta is a hotbed for players—so there's no difference there, and to be honest with you, Alberta has traditionally been strong too," David said. "But one of the things that I think that we do have on our side [compared to other programs] is that we have a full-year program. We play and train outside all year, so after our CIS season we still continue to train in the wintertime."

And we can do that because we have no snow."

"Their season of play is a little bit different," University of Alberta Pandas head coach Liz Jespen agreed. "They can play outdoor soccer year-round, and I think when you include that they have fantastic coaching staff, you might explain their dominance [over the last few years]."

While the teams from BC have had the most recent success on the national stage, women's soccer is a sport that Canada West has dominated for the last decade. Only three of the last ten CIS gold medals have been handed to schools outside of the conference, with five different schools accounting for the seven top finishes. Unlike the costal team's dominance over the last four years, the disparity between East and West is something that can be chalked up to two differences—the level of coaching and the talent pools—that set the regions apart.

"The West has been very proactive in hiring full-time coaches and I think you see that investment right away. The schools in the East that have good programs are moving towards having full-time coaches," David said. "Also, in the West there aren't as many universities as there are in Ontario. So, in Ontario you have 13

universities that are all competing for the same players, so all of a sudden your pool gets a bit weak."

"The eastern conferences get watered down because there are so many schools so you get your good players going many different places," Jespen added.

However, the gradual addition of teams to Canada West over the last decade has expanded the number of schools trying to attract CIS-calibre players, eroding the talent pool available to each team. While this and the creeping expansion of the conference is something that Jespen doesn't believe to be a critical problem, David disagrees.

"I really really do think that [Canada West] needs to worry about letting in too many programs," said David, whose Vikes are one of six BC teams in Canada West—four of which are located in the Vancouver area. "That's no disrespect to any of the new programs and young programs coming in; it's just a matter of numbers. The more schools you add, the [more] quality players you need and I don't know if we have a large supply of the quality of player that has kept us strong traditionally. Only time will tell, but I think we're kind of at the maximum number of teams."

second of three Canada West tournaments going 1-2 against Calgary, UBC and Victoria. Alberta's inability to defeat either the Vikes or the Thunderbirds have left them in a difficult position for defending their banner. A 2-3 record does not a national championship make.

Bears Basketball

This years Bears lost their first game of the year to some former teammates in the annual alumni game. 2002 national champs Phil Scherer and Steven Parker dropped 22 and 21 respectively on the baby Bears en route to victory, proving once again that youth and athleticism is no match for experience and talent.

Fantasy Hockey

The Gateway held its annual NHL draft on Friday afternoon—causing a severe lack of production around the office—and despite having to catch a plane and leaving after the eighth round, my team is still clearly the best in the league. If it weren't for an inexplicable autodraft selection of Martin Gelinas that prompted an opponent to comment, "Martin Gelinas is still alive?" I'd go so far as to say my team is perfect. Also, zero per cent Flames. I wish Alberta was as Flames-free as my team.

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THE PEP RALLY

by Paul Owen: Monogamist

Bears Football

The glorious Golden Bears finally got some offensive production this weekend as they put up 39 on Simon Fraser. Unfortunately, the Clan (0-4) struck a deal with Lucifer before the game that allowed them to more-than-double their points total on the season and drop 36 points on the Alberta warriors. William Wallace-esque running back/kick returner Kendall Jeske scored a touchdown with 1:03 left in the game to tie it up at 36 before kicker/viking warrior Scott Stevenson kicked a field goal in overtime to lift Alberta to their third victory of the year. Reports of the team raping and pillaging Vancouver after the game are unfounded.

Bears Fútbol

The Alberta soccer team with penises pulled off a large upset this weekend when they handed top-ranked UBC (4-1-2) their first loss of the season.

The BC boys let their tears flow while the Bears celebrated moving into first place in Canada West. The T-Birds were still crying on Sunday when the Bears (5-0-3) downed Victoria 2-0. John Konye scored a pair in the 3-1 victory over UBC and earned himself Canada West Male Athlete of the Week honours. The Thunderbirds, meanwhile, merely sobbed and vowed revenge.

Pandas Hockey

The almost unbeatable Pandas faced their first CIS opponents of the season in the Marion Hilliard Tournament hosted by the University of Toronto. Lindsay McAlpine scored the lone Alberta goal in a 1-1 tie against the University of Ottawa and netted two more in a 3-2 loss to McGill. Brodie MacDonald scored the two goals in a 2-1 win over Toronto as the Pandas finished 1-1-1. This could be a problem for the Pandas as the season wears on, as the idea behind scoring by committee is to have the goals come from many different sources, and not just one player per game.

Pandas Field Hockey

The defending national champions continued their disappointing season in the

BLOWIE SHOW by Chris Jung



BITTEN by Robin Sissons



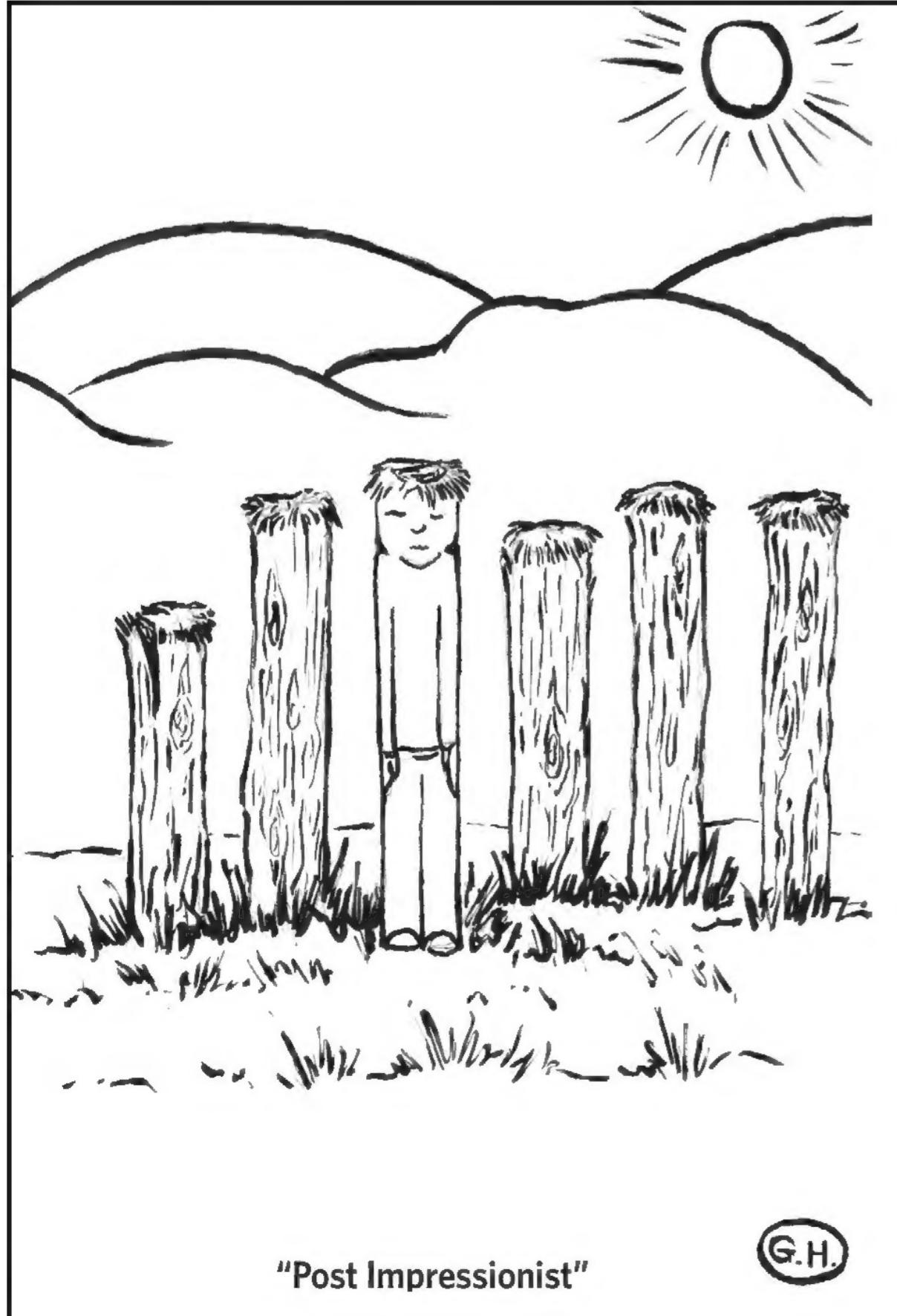
STICKMAN by Jonn Gagnon



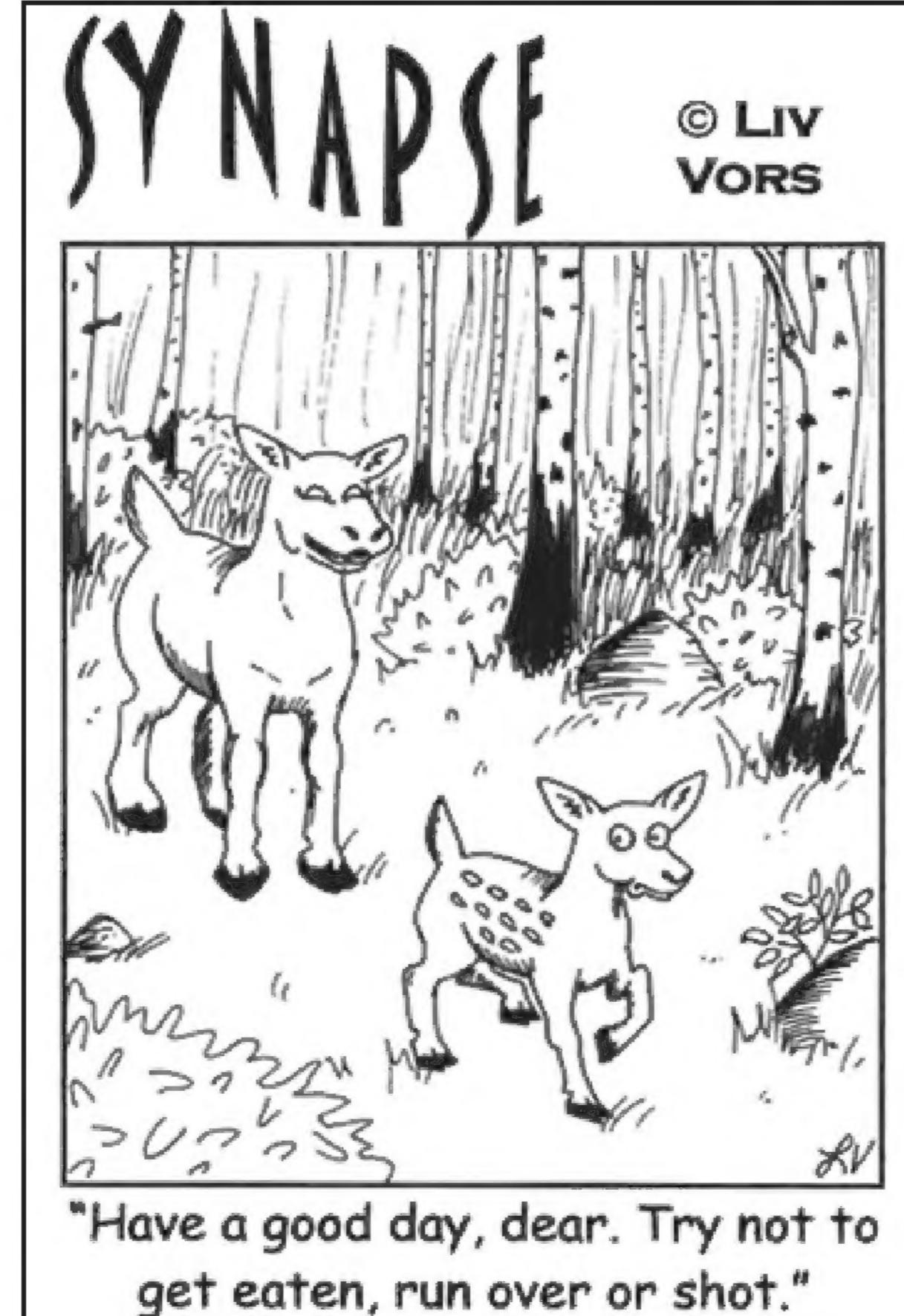
'NAM 1969 by Andrew Curley



GRATUITOUS GROANERS by Philip & Graeme Head



SYNAPSE by Liv Vors



STEVE NASH LIVING & LOVING by Braden Deane (CUP)





ASHLEY SCARLETT

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) meets Sundays at 10:30 am at L'Arche, 7708-83 St., Edmonton. Visitors welcome. Visit

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Volunteer Assistant for Kids Karate Club, ages 6-12. One-hour/week Thursdays 16:00, two blocks from UofA Campus. 2+ years experience in any Martial Art. E-mail WPKC_Sensei@hotmail.com or phone Gordon at 492-9930 (weekdays).

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AVALANCHE OF PANCAKES

"Robots, monkeys and cheerleaders are the road to victory," wrote Tony, scribbling furiously in the front of his book. "Tiki masks don't hurt either," he added as an afterthought. Mike considered these thought-provoking words of advice and giggled contentedly to himself. Suddenly, and without warning, the chitter of a nearby squirrel announced the arrival of an impending leviathan of certain and absolute doom...

THURSDAY ON TOWN HALL!

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

SUB ALUMNI ROOM



Fill your stomach with something other than barley and hops.

BIG FILL. SMALL BUDGET.



THE GATEWAY

volume XCVII number 9 • the official student newspaper at the university of alberta • www.gateway.ualberta.ca • tuesday, 3 october, 2006



FROM A LAND BEFORE PING-PONG Dr Caldwell proudly shows off a fossilized piece of an ancient marine creature. Caldwell hopes that the eight fossils will allow scientists a better understanding of the mysterious Ichthyosaurus species.

Fossils finally being analyzed

The ancient find was originally brought to U of A in the '70s, but was recently rediscovered under a ping-pong table in the department's undergrad lounge

JASKARAN SINGH
News Writer

An 8 million-year-old fossil of an ancient marine creature, lost for over 20 years, was rediscovered in 2002 at the University of Alberta underneath a ping-pong table and the results of the fossil research have only recently been released.

"[The fossils] made it under the ping-pong table in the undergraduate teaching lab, which ended up being the undergraduate teaching table that all the specimens for the paleontology classes would be laid out upon for the students to look at ... I did my undergraduate [at the University] in the '80s, and the irony is that the ping-pong table Ichthyosaurus was under my feet the whole bloody time," Dr Michael Caldwell, U of A's professor of vertebrate paleontology, explained.

The bones were originally discovered in 1971 in the Northwest Territories by a group of graduate students and a few volunteers. In fact, a technician who was on the original expedition still works at the University today. While travelling through the wilderness, the group had stumbled upon eight well-preserved skeletons of Ichthyosaurs: prehistoric marine creatures that resemble modern-day dolphins.

Caldwell explains that they're nowhere near mammals on the biological tree of life, and interestingly enough, they're almost as distant to dinosaurs.

Due to the size and weight of the artifacts, they were stored where they would be out of the way—underneath a ping-pong table in the undergraduate teaching lab.

"[There were two alumni who] both knew that ping-pong table Ichthyosaurus was under there, but people never mentions things like that if no one ever thinks to ask about them, right? Well no one thought to ask them because no one else knew what was under the table," Caldwell said.

I did my undergraduate [at the University] in the '80s, and the irony is that the ping-pong table Ichthyosaurus was under my feet the whole bloody time."

**DR MICHAEL CALDWELL,
PROFESSOR OF VERTEBRATE
PALEONTOLOGY**

The specimens were uncovered when Caldwell began renovations on the laboratory in the summer of 2002, and since the discovery he and an undergraduate student have published three papers and given one conference on the fossils.

The associate professor who had held Caldwell's position at the time of the original unearthing specialized in mammal vertebrates rather

than species of Ichthyosaurus, so he had not expressed a great interest in the fossils. The professor had sent for a specialist from the Royal Ontario Museum; however, the specialist never showed up.

There were eight fossils found, including two embryos discovered in an adult female. The Ichthyosaurs that were found in the Northwest Territories are by no means the oldest, nor the largest. What makes them special is the information they provide about the environment. The majority of Ichthyosaurs are found in certain locations in Germany, these fossils were found in the deep north, in a location of cold water, this poses many questions about the biogeography of the species.

"It's not going to rewrite our basic understanding of Ichthyosaurus relationships, but what it does do is add a very important part of the picture; or, it finishes off that part of that picture at the twilight of the evolutionary history of this group, where they are actually about to go extinct," Caldwell said.

As for the future of the discovery, the fossils are already allocated a place in the U of A's fossil records, and in the forthcoming year there is to be more research. Caldwell was awarded Australian Council Linkage Grant, meaning next year Australian authorities will come in hope of excavating more Ichthyosaurus paraphernalia, and comparing it with similar specimens discovered the deep end of the southern hemisphere.

Norovirus strikes Lister's residents

SCOTT LILWALL
Deputy News Editor

Lister Hall has shut its doors to guests and has shutdown some services to students after over 100 people living in the residence have fallen ill to a Norovirus. But Capital Health and University of Alberta officials are saying that the outbreak of the virus seems to be under control.

"As of this morning, 80 per cent of the students who have shown symptoms have recovered. We have 24 active cases at the moment," said Carl Amrhein, Provost of the U of A, at a press conference yesterday.

He explained that Capital Health suspected the outbreak to be a Norovirus, which was later confirmed at 6pm yesterday, after samples from students were tested at Edmonton's Provincial Laboratory for Public Health.

According to Dr James Talbot, Associate Medical Officer of Health for Capital Health, Noroviruses are a class of organisms that cause gastroenteritis. They're transmitted by touching objects handled by an infected person. And, while the length of the illness is short, the virus can make people very sick.

"Most of the people who have been infected so far have some combination of nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. It's very unpleasant for them for the first 4 hours, and then they are recovering very well after that," he

said in a phone interview.

Talbot said that there have been 123 students confirmed sick, among students in Lister Hall, 26 of which began to show symptoms since Friday morning. The rate of infection, he said, seems to be slowing down quickly, with just one new case reported Sunday.

Capital Health has taken over the situation to prevent the disease from spreading into the rest of the residence and beyond the halls of Lister.

But some think that the number of students ill is being underreported. A student living in Lister Hall, who spoke with the *Gateway* on the condition that her name not be printed, believes that more than 123 students in the building have caught the virus.

"That's an underreported number. On one tower alone in [Mackenzie Hall], I know there have been at least 150 cases. I think there are about 50 on each floor—around that number. There have been a few floors where the whole floor is sick, and that was last week, when [news stories] were coming out. There are way more cases than that. And people are still getting sick," she said.

She added that the floor coordinators in Lister Hall have instructed students not to speak with media about the outbreak, and to direct reporters to someone from the University's public affairs department.

PLEASE SEE LISTER • PAGE 3

Maclean's files 22 freedom of information requests

RAMIN OSTAD
News Staff

Of the 22 universities hoping to exclude themselves from the Maclean's annual university rankings, all but two may soon be forced to participate, thanks to numerous Freedom of Information (FOI) requests filed by the magazine.

On 14 August, eleven Canadian universities opted out of answering the questionnaire required to create the magazine's university issue, objecting to the methodology used by Maclean's to analyze the information. Other postsecondary institutions soon followed suit, bringing the number to 22—nearly half of the 47 universities ranked in the survey. This action prompted Maclean's to issue FOI requests to 20 of the refusing institutions, in an attempt to gain the information necessary in time for their 2 November issue. (Two

universities located in New Brunswick didn't receive requests, as the freedom of information act in that province does not apply to universities.)

"We've been sending these [questionnaires] to these universities for 15 years, and we've been getting it back completed for 15 years, so this was certainly a surprise," said Tony Keller, managing editor of special projects at Maclean's. "There's really no other way to get information out of a public body that refuses to give it to you than to use the Freedom of Information Law."

Alberta's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP Act) legally obligates all public institutions to disclose records in their custody. Henry Davis, the Access and Privacy Advisor for the Information and Privacy Office at the University of Alberta, explained the details of the act.

PLEASE SEE MACLEAN'S • PAGE 3

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I want popcorn

The results are in for the Edmonton International Film Festival. Check out the reviews, then go eat some candy.

A&E, PAGE 8-9



Puck shopping

The Golden Bears hosted the Brick Invitational hockey tournament this weekend. No sofas were purchased.

SPORTS, PAGE 12

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colophon

The Gateway is created using Macintosh computers, Umax PowerLook 1000 flatbed scanners, and a Nikon Super Cool Scan optical film scanner. Adobe InDesign is used for layout. Adobe Illustrator is used for vector images, while Adobe Photoshop is used for raster images. Adobe Acrobat is used to create PDF files which are burned directly to plates to be mounted on the printing press. Text is set in a variety of sizes, styles, and weights of **FENICE**, **Joanna**, **Kepler** and **Whitney**. The **Manitoban** is the Gateway's sister paper, and we love her dearly, though "not in that way." The Gateway's games of choice are **Pac-Man** and **Super Mario World**.

contributors

Ross "Giant Amazon Women" Prusakowski, Kari Chan, Derek Larson, Ramin Ostad, Mike Smith, Andrew Renfree, Robin Collum, Patrick Ross, Conal Pierse, Victor Vargas, Elizabeth McMillan, Chris Jung, Robin Siemons, John Gagnon, Andrew Curley, Phil Head, Graeme Head, Liv Vors, Braden Deane, Locutus of Borg, Jaskaran Singh, Krystle Gan, Kim Misutka, Ryan Heise, Bryan Saunders, Daniel Kaszor, Diana Song, Mana Kotovych, Ryan Kenny, Joel Tiedemann, Lacina Desjarlais, Jesse Whitehead, Ashley Scarlett, Pete Yee, Erinne Fenwick, Mr Mistofoles, Brian Parker

Speakers from NASA land at U of A

Space symposium kicked off by exploring new ways to enhance and improve space explorations

DEREK LARSON
News Writer

From Canadian space exploration to the aurora and dancing hair cells, the Engineering Teaching and Learning Complex (ETLC) Solarium was host to a number of talks during the first day of the University of Alberta Space Exploration Symposium 2006 last Wednesday.

The Symposium started with Dr Andy Greenshaw, Associate Vice-President (Research) at the U of A, giving the opening talk.

Wednesday was undoubtedly the physics portion of the Symposium, and many of the talks involved research into the enigmatic behavior of the upper atmosphere.

Among the topics discussed were auroras, and the process of our magnetic field interacting with the solar magnetic field that creates the coloured lights.

"[Like] what you see when you stir your double-double from Tim Hortons," said one of speakers, research associate Jonathan Rae.

But there are also poorly understood and potentially harmful processes going on, symposium-goers heard, such as the Van Allan Radiation Belts that surround our planet, and protects Earth from radiation from the Sun.

And to understand the reason behind that and other mysteries in the upper reaches of our planet, Mann explained, the U of A is leading an initiative in partnership with the Canadian Space Agency, NASA, as well as other academic institutions to launch the Outer Radiation Belt Injection, Transport, Acceleration, and Loss Satellite (ORBITALS) Small Satellite Mission. Tentatively set to launch in 2012, the scientific satellite will gather much needed data about near-Earth space, not only to further research here, but around the world.

Dr Richard D Boyle, electrophysiologist and the director of the Bio-Visualization, Imaging and Simulation (BioVIS) Technology Center at the NASA Ames Research Center, provided a shift in focus for the keynote address, discussing research into biological adaptations to microgravity.

His studies, done both in space and at the Ames Research Centre, involve study of hairs of the inner ear, those that are responsible for orientation and balance in all animals. In a video clip he even showed one microscopic hair—which responds to electrical current—moving to the beat of *Rocking Around the Clock*, which was being electrically transferred to it.

"The hope is to develop a strategy for countermeasures so that one could intervene if needed to help the nervous system readapt more quickly, back to a new gravitational state. So that if you were to land on Mars, you would be pretty soon ready to go. If you're incapacitated or you feel really lousy, it's going to affect the mission," Boyle said in an earlier interview.

"The hope is to develop a strategy for countermeasures so that one could intervene if needed to help the nervous system readapt more quickly, back to a new gravitational state. So that if you were to land on Mars, you would be pretty soon ready to go."

DR RICHARD D BOYLE
NASA ELECTROPHYSIOLOGIST

"Doing space experiments is extremely difficult," related Boyle, speaking of the hurdles involved with merging science with space exploration. "You want to keep the experiment just as simple as possible."

The symposium ran from 26-27 September. While the first day dealt with a wide variety of physics research and concerns, the second day focused on the planet Mars. For coverage of the second day of the symposium, see the adjacent article.

Day two keynote speaker outlines status of continuing search for signs of alien life on Mars

KARI CHAN
News Writer

The question of life on Mars is still very much on the minds of researchers from the University of Alberta, who hosted a series of seminars last Thursday on the red planet, in what was the second day of the U of A Space Exploration Symposium.

University students and faculty from all disciplines were invited to share their thoughts on everything from fire protection clothing technology to Martian meteorites. However, the main focus of the day was the possibility of life on Mars.

"What we're looking for is the possibility of a second genesis of life. We're looking for a type of life form that's not like us. We're looking for aliens," Dr Chris McKay, the keynote speaker for the night and a researcher for NASA explained, stressing the importance of having diverse life forms available to study.

"If you were doing a senior project on fruit, you would want to compare apples and oranges. [But] if the only fruit you had was oranges, you would be led to mistakenly believe that fruits all look like [oranges]," he explained. "The problem we have with life is that we're trying to understand life at a deep level, and all we have is one example, all we have are oranges. We are looking for something a little different to compare to."

McKay singled out Mars as the place most likely to have evidence of alien life as, in the past, Mars had an atmosphere similar to Earth's.

"There are really three reasons [that Mars is the focus]," McKay explained. "One is direct evidence for past liquid water. Look at life on Earth: the common ecological requirement for life is liquid water. That is the most important fact we know about Mars. Mars has an atmosphere with carbon dioxide and nitrogen, key elements required for life, and in a practical sense, Mars is a good place to preserve evidence of life."

The next step, McKay added, would be to find a life form on Mars.

"A lot of the focus of Mars exploration is to go search for a fossil, but

remember, we're looking for a second genesis of life and a fossil would not be enough. A fossil will tell us that there was life on Mars, but they wouldn't tell us the nature of that life or its relationship to life on Earth. We're looking for life that isn't related to us." McKay clarified.

McKay believes that the chance of finding a life form would be greatest under the ice of Mars. Such an experiment would require digging under the surface of Mars, triggering concerns about contamination.

"The issue that comes up is ... [humans] will contaminate Mars before we have a chance to determine if it has life ... [but] in a sense, it's too late. We know that the Spirit Rover had 100,000 bacteria on it," McKay acknowledged. However, while he noted it may sound significant, it's actually remarkably clean considering a single gram of dirt contains approximately 10 billion bacteria.

"The good news is that Mars is a very lethal environment and it's not easy to contaminate. The bugs on the Rover that were exposed to the Martian environment are dead. [The] environment is not suitable for growth of any Earth organisms ... the only contamination that remains on Mars is organisms inside the metal ... sitting there dormant. That means that the possibility exists that we could decontaminate Mars," McKay explained.

It's also possible he continued, that Martian life forms are related to life on Earth. Meteors are proof that material can be exchanged between the two planets.

"Meteorites [that land on Earth] can tell us of the conditions that exist on Mars," said Dr Chris Herd, a professor at the U of A Earth and Atmospheric Science department.

If indeed Mars doesn't offer proof of a second genesis, McKay said that there are other places in the solar system that might offer evidence of life.

"The hit list for me is Mars [then] Europa which is a moon of Jupiter and more recently Enceladus, one of the moons of Saturn," McKay said.

There are currently five missions operating on Mars, with the sixth, the Mars Phoenix, set to launch in 2007.

STREETERS

The Liberal leadership race is on!

Based on sexual appeal and hypothetical bedroom prowess, who do you think would be the best leader of the Liberal party?

Chris Hsin
Business IVAmanda Fyfe
Education IVMarjorie Konrad
Phys Ed IMarc Laponte
Phys Ed I

I'm a fan of Bob Rae, because he's got nice eyes, nice hair ... he's got a cute pout.

Bob Rae screwed Ontario, so that's a reason why he would definitely not be a good lover.

Maybe him, Gerard Kennedy. He looks the youngest; he probably has the most stamina and endurance out of all of them.

I'd say him [pointing to picture of Gerard Kennedy], just cause of the way he's looking, and the whole French thing.

Compiled and photographed by Ashley Scarlett and Mike Otto

Admin increases cleaning in residence to reduce infection rate

LISTER ♦ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

"At first, we were told that we shouldn't say anything because it would not be good for the reputation of Lister, but then they say that it will cause a panic among people and parents would get concerned," the student continued. "But really, if your kid is in Lister, you'd want to hear about it, you know? Especially if they're sick and you can't contact them."

Other students contacted by the Gateway confirmed the instructions to avoid talking with the media.

A meeting for residents of Lister and the public was held last night in one of the building's conference rooms. In attendance was Dima Utgoff, Director of Residence Services, who explained what measures the U of A and Capital Health have taken to control the outbreak. During the meeting, he explained that Lister had restricted guest access to the building, and has moved the conferences that were scheduled to be held there, which will continue until at least Wednesday. As well, changes to food services, such as closing the salad bar and handing out individual sets of cutlery instead of storing them together, were made to prevent the disease from spreading during meals.

One of the most important measures, he explained, has been an increased cleaning schedule, especially concentrating on the building's shared washrooms, which present the biggest risk of transmission. Utgoff said that Lister has contracted out to two local cleaning



KRISTINA SULATYCKI

GIVE ME AN OUTBREAK The virus' spread is slowing, says Provost Amrhein.

companies to help handle the increased cleaning schedule.

Talbot told the crowd on ways to prevent the spread of the disease.

"Without getting too graphic ... things like diarrhea are ways for the virus to pass copies of itself to others. It's very effective. What you are seeing are the mechanisms of a perfectly evolved organism," he said.

The best defence against infection is that residents, ill and healthy alike, practice good hygiene, especially focusing on frequent hand washing.

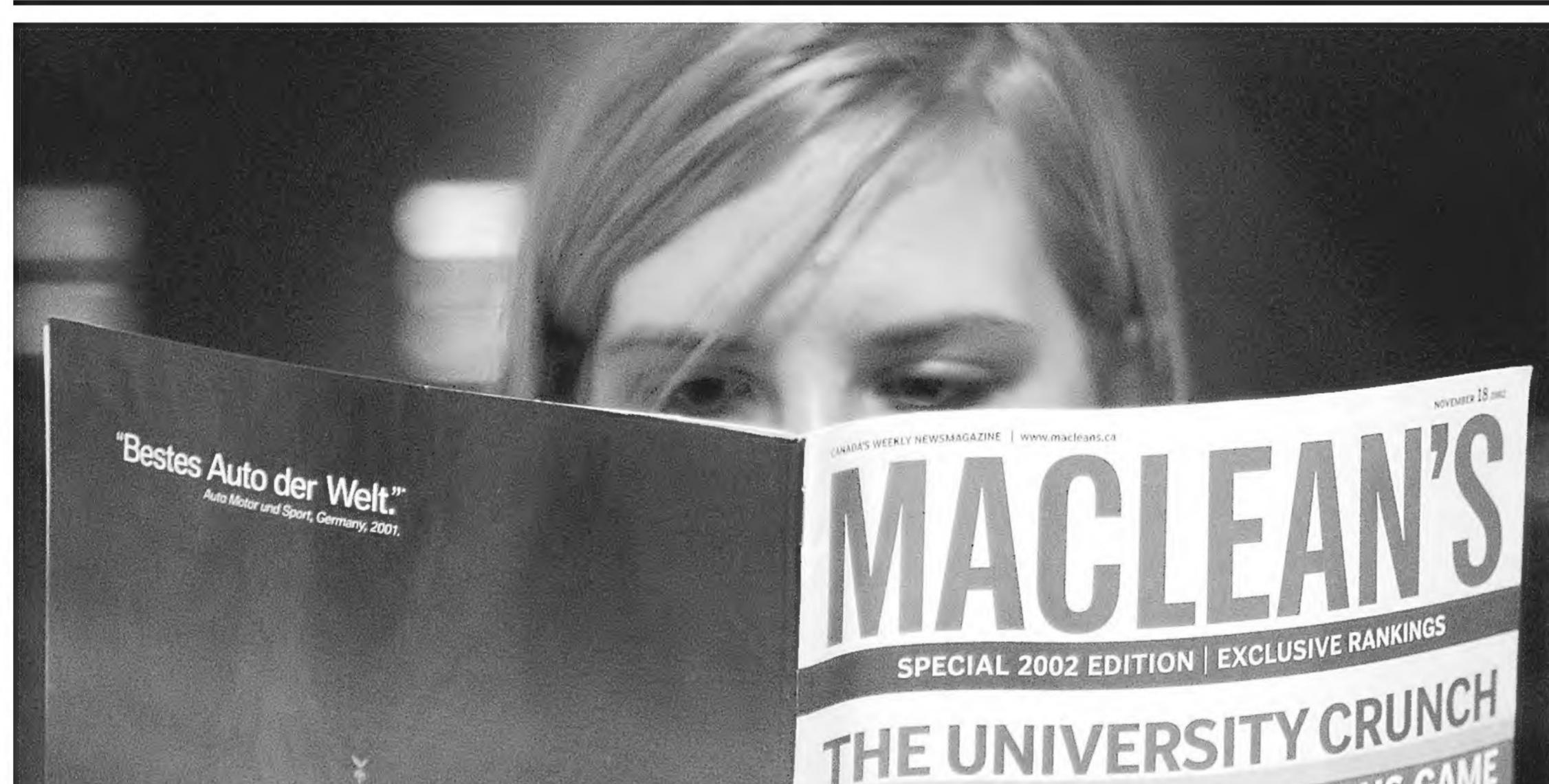
Talbot said that Capital Health has not located any source for the outbreak,

and believes that it's simply a consequence of having many people living in a relatively small space.

"The odds are that this was circulating in the community, and as students came into residence, that's where transmission started to happen."

He said that, due to the measures taken by the U of A and the monitoring of student health by floor coordinators, the virus' progress has slowed. Still, Capital Health will continue to oversee the situation for the time being.

"If we get 48 hours with no new cases, then we'll feel like we'll have it under control," Talbot concluded.



MY ISSUE WILL GO ON Despite lack of support from some universities, Maclean's plans to carry on the annual rankings.

Macleans rating to be published

MACLEAN'S ♦ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"The act provides the right of access to records held by public bodies by any individual, and that right of access is subject to some specific and limited exceptions that are recited in the act," Davis said.

These exceptions allow institutions to deny a FOIPP request if it attempts to access confidential evaluations made by the institution, if disclosure may be harmful to an individual or to public safety, and other limitations provided by the act.

"When the request is received, the public body has a duty to assist the applicant, and it spells out a time frame for a response," Davis said. "Normally the first instance is 30 days from the time of receiving the application."

For Keller, the FOIPP requests were a necessary last resort.

"In the past, lots of universities have criticized the ranking ... and that's fair, that's what you do in the marketplace of ideas. The whole idea of

refusing to make information public, to anybody, because you are unhappy with the way journalists are using that information—that's a brand new development," he said.

According to Keller, Maclean's has made alterations to their rankings system in order to appease the requests of the universities—the most comprehensive of which being their new University Research Tool. With it, readers can access all of the information that Maclean's has compiled on the 47 universities surveyed, and rank the institutions based on features important to individual users—allowing for much more personalized results.

"Readers want to know: is there a real difference between finishing first and finishing fifth?" Keller explained.

"I think people would want to know that, and they're now going to be able to see that, as of this fall. That's actually the biggest complaint the universities had for saying they didn't want to give us information. We've

answered it, and none of them have even responded to that."

While the universities may provide the information to the request within the 30-day response period, there's the possibility of the institutions extending the deadline in court passed the 2 November issue date; if that happens, Maclean's will be forced to continue the rankings without up-to-date information.

"We will, in all cases, use the best publicly available information," Keller said. "Every university is being evaluated, and for every university there will be complete information. For some universities, some of the information may be a year old."

The Gateway attempted to contact U of A officials in regards to the story, but after a number of attempts to set up an interview, they have not yet made a comment. There has yet to be any indication from the University as to what actions will be taken in response to the FOIPP requests.

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CAMPUS CRIME BEAT

Compiled by Mike Otto,
Edmon Rotea and Victor Vargas

SIMPLY A STREAK OF GENIUS

At 11:23am on 6 September a naked male was spotted running through the halls of the Law building. A description of the nude avenger, provided by one unlucky observer, was passed on to Campus Security. A short time later it was reported that a man was stripping down to his underwear and harassing women near SUB.

When confronted by Campus Security, the man was given a warning for being intoxicated in a public place. As he had no University affiliation, he was left in the care of a sober friend, and presumably re-pantsed shortly thereafter.

SMASH'N GRAB AND LOSE

Sometime between 7:30-11pm on 29 September, a vehicle parked near the Faculty of Business building east loading dock was broken into.

The dastardly persons unknown made off with some audiovisual equipment and a backpack, which—in addition to the damage to the vehicle—made for a total loss of \$600. Some of the property was later found and recovered by Campus Security.

STOP, IN THE NAME OF YOUR NAME

At 2:30am on 30 September, a male cyclist was stopped by Campus Security for a minor traffic violation near 112 Street and 89 Avenue.

When he was asked by the officers for identification, the brash biker rudely refused to provide his name. He was arrested and charged accordingly, and subsequently trespassed from campus.

YOU GUYS ARE BORING

At 9pm on 30 September Campus Security was called when someone noticed a six-year-old child was spotted wandering around in a field near the Michener Park residences. The boy was quickly found and reunited with his family by Campus Security without incident. He had been visiting a friend when he wandered off and became lost in the field.

U of A prof leads program aimed at rehabilitating former child soldiers

Corruption and continuing conflicts make simple solutions hard to come by in war-torn countries, says Andy Knight, but education and disarmament can help ease the terrible situation for many children

MIKE SMITH
News Writer

War has a tremendous impact on a society, destroying institutions, infrastructure and displacing families. However, one of the most profound results, and unfortunately, one the hardest to repair, is the use of child soldiers. It's this issue that the University of Alberta's Dr Andy Knight, director of the Children and Armed Conflict program, is hoping to tackle.

"Most Canadians and many people in the Western world aren't aware of the significance of the problem. Part of what we are trying to do is educate, and to show people that this is bigger than they might think."

ANDY KNIGHT,
DIRECTOR,
CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

Recently returned from the program's second conference in Ghana, he's attempting to learn how to protect and rehabilitate children living in conflict zones.

"We may not be able to get rid of conflict, but one thing we can try to do is to make the conflict situation better for most kids that have to live in that kind of situation," Knight said.

As part of the research program, Aaron Johnson and Dana Glorieux, both political science students,

travelled to Sierra Leone in May 2005 to help assist government and NGOs working in the area through the Canada Corps University Partnership Program. They returned to Canada in September of that year. Knight helped set up the trip, and hopes their experiences and subsequent report will encourage other students to do the same.

The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program is still in its infancy. According to Knight, campaigns to disarm citizens by purchasing their weapons haven't been effective in many states, either due to lack of funds or mismanagement.

"We found out that in Liberia, the UN was giving \$300 for AK-47s, but next door in Côte D'Ivoire they were giving \$900 for AK-47s. The Liberians aren't stupid. Those kinds of complications we won't know about until we sit down and talk to officials who are running the DDR programs," he said.

One of the biggest challenges facing Knight and his colleagues is the complexity of the issue.

"You are not going to find a simple solution to the problems of conflict," he said. "Most Canadians and many people in the Western world aren't aware of the significance of the problem," Knight said.

He estimated that there are approximately 300 000 child soldiers in the world presently. Part of what we are trying to do is educate, and to show people that this is bigger than they might think."

Through this research program, Knight is working on a book with the help of several contributors from across the globe. Much of the research focuses on the DDR programs in place to help deal with the training of children as soldiers.



JESSE WHITEHEAD

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND Dr Knight wants to see children off the battlefields.

"There hasn't been a real critical academic assessment and evaluation of these programs, so we don't know which ones work and which ones don't. How can we make the whole process better to make sure peace is sustainable?"

The book will collect the results of three conferences, the final one taking place at the U of A in March 2007. It's hoped this book will be used by universities and government officials, and Knight plans on sending the final report to the UN as well. The UN-run University for Peace in

Costa Rica has also shown considerable interest in the book.

Although, he hopes his research will provide answers to many questions, ultimately, according to Knight, the success of these DDR programs rests on the co-operation of all actors, both international and local, and the commitment to carry them out to the end.

"There is no single solution, but multiple solution, and sometimes messy solutions ... It's up to the international community ... to implement those measures," he concluded.

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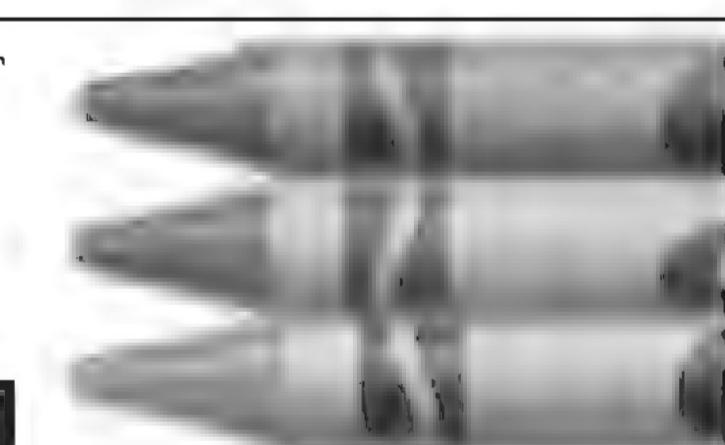
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OPINION

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Getting the skinny on digital cameras

"THEY SAY THE CAMERAS ADD TEN POUNDS, BUT HP digital cameras can help reverse that effect. The slimming feature ... is a subtle effect that can instantly trim off pounds from the subjects in your photos!" So says the Hewlett-Packard website. The slimming feature is an on-camera tool that slims your subject without noticeably distorting the proportions of the photograph, meaning, as HP puts it, "anyone can appear more slender—instantly."

I'm not sure which part of this makes me the most upset. Is it that once again a company has taken advantage of our society's insecurities in order to further their economic growth? Is it the fact that HP is defiling my beloved medium of photography? Or do I just feel sorry for the people who've spent hundreds of hours developing this trite and insulting piece of technology?

Perhaps I shouldn't be so shocked—using body image to sell a product is nothing new. If anything, camera manufacturers were just a step behind, though it seems they're now caught up. I'm curious as to whether there really is a demand for such a product and wonder when the competition will release the first cameras with under-eye bag removers, belly-roll hiders, skin cleaners and wrinkle smoothers. Perhaps they're just cashing in on aging baby boomers hoping to look as good as they used to; maybe they're going for the younger, more technologically savvy crowd, with their wavering self esteem and never-ending hope of looking like Twiggy.

No matter who it's intended for, technology like this calls into question the purpose of photography altogether. Newspaper photography in particular is meant to document the occurrence of events as they happen in order to communicate them accurately to the public.

Photography for the general public serves the same purpose. You may not consider the pictures you take with your point-and-shoot camera as a document or a story, but they are a testament to events that occurred nonetheless. Altering your pictures on your camera (or after the fact) alters their version of reality—and the past is defined only by our record of it. But what the hell, we love to look back and think we were ten pounds thinner than we actually were, and we'll graciously accept the compliments on our appearance that we'll get over a casual photo-browsing session with friends and relatives.

Yet it still amazes me that we would be willing to allow our aesthetic values to be determined by the people who can profit from it the most. It's not the aesthetics of the photograph that matter so much as our own self-perception. We're buying into the idea that we require technology in order to look good enough to be seen by ourselves and others. We know we're being manipulated and in a way, we like it.

However, it must be kept in mind that eating disorders are becoming more and more prevalent in younger and younger children. According to recent research done by Capital Health, one in five preteens is at risk of an eating disorder. Perhaps this latest get-thin-quick method isn't directly hazardous to your health—who knows, maybe it will soon become a standard feature on all cameras. But we can only hope that it's quickly discarded.

KRISTINA SULATYCKI
Photo Editor

Newspapers do matter!

KUDOS TO EDMONTON JOURNAL INVESTIGATIVE journalists Charles Rusnell and Karen Kleiss for scooping yet another huge story in our city—the shameful sanitary state of Edmonton's restaurants, as well as Capital Health's equally shameful negligence in doing anything about it.

In an age of increasing media concentration and decreasing journalistic standards, it's nice to see that there are still a few writers out there who care enough to ask the hard questions, do a little research and get to the bottom of something that the public has every right to know about.

Now if you'll excuse me, my undercooked RATT burger with translucent tomato awaits.

ADAM GAUMONT
Opinion Editor

WE HAVE TO BRING DARK ROASTED FREEDOM TO THESE COLOMBIAN SWINE!



IN LIGHT OF RISING TIM HORTONS PRICES, CANADIANS GET ON BOARD WITH THE WAR ON TERROR

CONAL PIERSE

LETTERS

Veep clarifies SU's tuition position

Re: "SU interest in student loan changes," 28 September.

I thought I'd take the opportunity to clarify my position from the aforementioned article. Given the quotes that were chosen, readers may have been left with the impression that the worsening deficiencies of the student loan system are being driven by increases in all the other costs besides tuition.

While escalating costs of living are a serious problem, and while the loan system has not at all kept pace with inflation in living costs, the major pressure on the loan system for the last 15 years has been rising tuition, which has driven up debt loads and prevented aid from being allocated to assist students in dealing with rising living costs.

The changes we are proposing to the student finance system would ideally compliment a significant tuition rollback. Once tuition is addressed and is affordable for all students, Alberta can better distribute student aid by targeting the overhead costs of an education, which remain a significant barrier for many students.

DAVID COURNOYER
VP External

'Stuff' cruelly overlooked in sorority segment

Although Lacina Desjarlais' article cleared up a few negative stereotypes about the Greek system, she still failed to bust all the myths (re: "Going Greek: An inside look at campus sororities," 28 September).

Since she is too cheap to shell out \$600 to make some friends, she obviously fell victim to the myth that fraternities and sororities are only a way to buy friends.

The confusion is that Greek organizations are not just a group of friends; they are a group of friends that do a whole lot of stuff. A lot of the time that stuff costs money, so when you pay dues you are actually buying all that stuff that they do.

This stuff usually includes weekly dinners, formal dinner tickets, registration for campus-rec sports, social events like parties and fraternity-sorority exchanges, use and upkeep for the chapter house, participation in Greek events, support from the international organization including leadership training, supplies, conferences and access to other chapter houses across North America.

Although the dues may seem like a lot, you get a lot out of it. Most Greek organizations even have several scholarships of varying amounts that usually cover the cost of dues. This is not any different from paying to play on a sports team; the only reason it costs so much is because

Greeks do a whole lot more than just play sports. Your decision to join should not be based on how much you are willing to pay to hang out with some people but on whether you want to do everything that the fraternity or sorority does.

PETER BULIS
Arts IV

Palmer's skepticism infectious

This is a response to Robin Palmer's excellent, witty and-on target comments regarding a questionnaire sent out to University students and, I assume, some faculty as well (re: "I'll take one flu over a cuckoo test," 28 September).

The public is simply not included in the planning process, except occasionally as the subject of these surveys. There is an assumption in governments that if you have a "plan" for something—including something as unprecedented and potentially disruptive and deadly as a global pandemic—then it will magically be followed by people who have had no prior knowledge given to them and who have not been given a chance to figure out what they need to do to get themselves and their families through this thing without dying. It is, in a word, a disconnected and compartmentalized mess with no public involvement or participation at all.

The idea of asking people

nonsense about vaccines is truly misplaced. The job of leaders is to be honest with the public—that there will be no vaccine for this because there cannot be any vaccine until 1) the virus is identified (and it does keep mutating), 2) the manufacturers are geared up to produce it, 3) the countries that succeed in making it decide to share with others and 4) there is a distribution system and sufficient delivery equipment to actually get the vaccine to people. The estimate on the time frame for this from people who are being honest is—get this—ten years.

So, yes, Robin Palmer, the survey you saw is absurd, inexcusably misleading and wasteful. I had hoped my country of origin was perhaps doing this better than we are in the US.

MARGOT WHITE
University of New Mexico

Letters to the editor should be dropped off at room 3-04 of the Students' Union Building, or e-mailed to letters@gateway.ualberta.ca.

The Gateway reserves the right to edit letters for length and clarity, and to refuse publication of any letter it deems racist, sexist, libellous or otherwise hateful in nature. The Gateway also reserves the right to publish letters online.

Letters to the editor should be no longer than 350 words, and should include the author's name, program, year of study and student identification number to be considered.

Oprah's Book Club: a case of literary enlightenment or plebeian propaganda?

Stick to the sob stories Oprah—you're no literary connoisseur



ELIZABETH
MCMILLAN

point

Back in 1996, Oprah inadvertently started the must-have list for American bookshelves. Since then, she's chosen a range of books that appeal to a wide audience and confront serious issues every year.

But at the risk of offending legions of minivan-driving, Croc sandal-wearing women, I have an issue with Oprah's Book Club. Don't get me wrong, the woman has made some positive contributions to society: she publicly renounced skinny jeans as universally unflattering, she taught America how to shop for bras, and she revealed Tom Cruise as a raging lunatic. But I want Oprah to stick to the tear-jerking sob stories and stay away from literature.

In typical Oprah nature, her books are often sentimental—because let's face it, nothing locks an Oprah audience like melodrama. Titles include all-American classics as John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* and *East of Eden*, as well as her favourite novel, Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*. High school English class, anyone? She also includes the Bible in her list of favourites—how original.

It's a sad reflection on society to think that people read because Oprah tells them to. I think it's great that people are reading, but knowing that in this case they're doing so because they've been handed a prepackaged ticket to critical thinking makes me seriously question their priorities. Watch TV, read books, follow steps to enlightened life.

The daytime TV tycoon has become what Roger Ebert is to movies and what Simon Cowell is to authors, offering guaranteed fame and fortune to



the chosen few writers who receive her blessing. I can't help but feel that a book is cheapened and dumbed down by the Oprah stamp, and I would personally be embarrassed to buy a book with one. Not only does it ruin the cover, but I'd worry that anyone who saw me with it would assume I'm the type of person who would listen to Dr Phil too. Oprah's name is not only a seal of approval but a brand in itself.

The publicity is a problem because the act of making the cut for Oprah's Book Club replaces the content of the book as a mark of value. The scheme succeeds by selling Oprah's wisdom, and not the books themselves. Publishers scramble to make the list in order to sell copies; meanwhile, readers no longer have to use their own judgment. The Oprah enterprise markets a product and suddenly a novel skyrockets to the top of the bestseller lists.

The Oprah empire is a consumerist machine. People are already counting down to her Christmas special—which, let's face it, isn't the act of extreme generosity that it's made out to be, but rather an advertiser's dream. In many ways, Oprah's Book Club is an attempt to generate revenue via the inevitable publishing partnerships as it is to remind America what people did before TiVo.

As a positive, people are reading literature—and hopefully thinking critically and appreciating it as well. In a culture crazed with instant gratification and with attention spans conditioned to 22-minute sitcoms, it takes effort and ambition to sit down with a book. Hell, I'm an English major and sometimes it's still as appealing as pulling teeth.

We're constantly barraged by media that tells us what to think, how to act and how to look. At the university level you'd think we'd be more sensitive to forming our own opinions. Just because Oprah can teach someone how to buy a bra doesn't mean she should get control of the literary world.

On that note, I'm off to finish Derrida before Prison Break starts. After all, it's all about priorities.

Don't hate tha playa, Elizabeth: hate tha book publishin' game



VICTOR
VARGAS

books, and while her endorsements mean guaranteed fame and fortune for the chosen authors, she also gives readers direction in a market that has little of it.

In the world of books, there are few well-known reviewers out there, and previous attempts to make a helpful review system have been in vain. For example, it wasn't too long ago when the credibility of Amazon's review system was destroyed by certain greedy authors who gave themselves gushing reviews—and who can blame them?

Tons of other people in the world have attempted the same thing, from the staff picks at your video store to the *Gateway*'s own movie, book and CD reviews—Oprah just happens to be the biggest and most successful of these talking heads. Best of all, she's not afraid to call greedy authors on their BS.

Remember a certain author a while ago that tried to pass his book off as a true story? When it came to light that some details were fabricated, Oprah tore him a new one.

Consumerist culture is a problem, but Oprah is hardly the cause. We have years of schooling and commercials to blame for that. If anything, she actually helps fight against it, because at least she tells people about the quality goods out there in a sea filled with crap.

Oprah isn't rich and successful because she uses some super mind-control rays, she's popular because she gives people good advice. Behind all the glitz and glamour, there are important messages like, do good things for others, there's still hope in the world, and you can change yourself for the better. If Oprah wasn't such a positive influence, her viewership—and readership—would plummet.

And keep in mind that we humans always have free will, so if you ever feel that Oprah is steering people wrong, then you can always just flick the switch.



counterpoint

For over a decade, Oprah has managed to accomplish what all the "Read-a-thons" and "Reading is Good" posters couldn't do: she got people reading again. Sure, many of them are reading because she told them too, but at least they're doing it. So congrats to Oprah on a job well done.

Oprah's readership is far from mindless, nor are they lacking in critical-thinking skills. People have gone on her show and said, "I hated this book," or, "I think this book means such-and-such."

And—gasp—Oprah encourages her readership to voice their opinions and discuss these books. She even dedicates an entire show to having members of the audience voice their opinions, as well as providing an Internet bulletin board for people to post their thoughts.

Everyone has their own taste, and Oprah's happens to be the tear-jerking kind—not that there's anything wrong with that. In fact, there are tons of clubs out there that cater to a specific demographic. Some people really like sci-fi, others like weepy romance novels and some people will only eat strawberry ice cream.

What's more, these tear-jerkers happen to be written by some of the greatest novelists of all time. You've got your Leo Tolstoy, you've got your William Faulkner, you've got your Toni Morrison, you've got your Maeve Binchy, you've got your Rohinton Mistry—and John Steinbeck is no slouch either.

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For more information, please contact the Chair of the Board of Directors at gsjs@gateway.ualberta.ca or visit <http://www.gateway.ualberta.ca/gsjs/>

Women in parliament a broad issue

From Canada to Afghanistan, proportional representation still a long way off



PATRICK
ROSS

the status of women living in Islamic theocracies.

By comparison, Canadian women have had the vote since 1916, when the government of Manitoba passed legislation allowing women to vote in provincial elections. By 1940, all of Canada's governments, including the federal government, had passed suffrage bills allowing women full participation in Canadian politics. In 1982, universal electoral rights were entrenched in the Canadian constitution.

Equality in law and equality in reality are two very different things, however. While considered equal under law, women clearly aren't considered equal in politics. And despite legal enfranchisement, they remain a minority in Parliament.

When Sheila Copps—one of Canada's most outspoken and accomplished female politicians—was elected to Parliament in 1984, she was one of only 27 women in Parliament (out of 282 seats at the time). Women held just short of ten per cent of Parliamentary seats. Years later, the picture is very different. While still falling far short of the oft-cited 52 per cent goal, 20 per cent percent is better than ten per cent, and still much better than zero.

Canadian political parties have expended a tremendous amount of energy in getting women elected, but for many years, this was not a fruitful endeavour. The 1970s and '80s are illuminating examples. Prior to 1980, of the 6845 people elected to Parliament, only 68 were women. This was reflective of the difficulty in

finding women willing to seek office. In the 1974 election, for example, the Liberals and NDP combined to nominate 139 women—nine of whom won—while the Conservative party was able to nominate eleven.

According to Copps, running for office is extremely treacherous for women. In her autobiography *Nobody's Baby*, she writes, "If you are a woman, the road to the House is not an easy one. You will have to fight like a man—to be forceful, aggressive, and to the point. You can't afford to pull your punches. You are breaking into a man's game when many men are struggling to maintain their hold on the country's power structures."

Unfortunately, women are still faced with these stereotypes and expectations—the attention currently being paid to Belinda Stronach's love life being recent proof of this. "Women bring a perspective to politics which allows them to break away from stereotypes," Copps writes. One finds a similar sentiment among the Afghan people who have voted women into their parliament, the perception being that these female candidates are untainted by past political strife.

As is the case for their Afghan counterparts, the future looks very bright for Canadian women. To prove this, one needs look no further than status of women on university campuses. On this very campus, the University of Alberta Students' Union features two female members on its five-member executive, including its duly elected President, Samantha Power.

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'Shrimp Challenge' a tall order

The best-laid schemes of rice and men go oft awry—or just get regurgitated



CONAL
PIERSE

from a stranger who gave me razor-blade-filled candy.

On the day of the event, my friends who'd witness my shame decided that Red Lobster wasn't "people food" and that we should go to a buffet place instead. I figured, "Sure why not, the end result would still be the same—what difference does scenery make?"

My first impression of the joint was that it was a place where people came to die. And despite the restaurant's name, nobody was smiling. We were all like hyenas, furious about having to settle for seconds.

**That night I wept
relentlessly as I realized
what I'd done. At one
point, I was absolutely
convinced that I was
going to die at Red
Lobster, surrounded
by shrimp tails and
cocktail sauce.**

The buffet spread was mainly Chinese food, though they did have mashed potatoes and onion rings for the all-important WTF factor. I tried to stick to what I knew, taking some spring rolls, onion rings and chicken balls for the first plate. I started on the onion rings, which were quite good, but this would be the only high point of the meal. Biting into the spring rolls was reminiscent of the snake full of snakes in *Indiana Jones* and

the Temple of Doom, and the chicken balls contained no discernable meat.

As I ate, I couldn't help but feel like somehow this was bad karma for all the evil I had done in my life. Each terrible bite was a time I purposely clotheslined a kid in Red Rover. Everything new I tried was worse than what came before it. My tongue was Apollo Creed getting murdered by the Russian. I kept saying, "Fuck this game I'm done," but peer pressure won out, and I kept lifting that fork. Since there was a charge for wasted food, I spent time looking for ways to hide it—but the salt shaker half-full of rotting rice told me that some poor bastard had beaten me to it.

One of my main problems was that I made the rookie buffet-eating mistake of loading up on large amounts of food instead of making a sampler platter. And just like a hotel heiress, everything I swallowed was too salty. Eating the ginger beef was like chewing through a Kevlar vest, and the lemon chicken looked suspiciously like it was covered in snot. Despite all this, I continued to force myself to eat until I reached maximum capacity and peak revulsion levels, though out of respect for the establishment I decided to finish my escapades outside.

My detonator was a mussel that my friend assured me was the "worst fucking thing [he'd] ever eaten." This thing was putrid even at arm's length and gave you the sensation that you were trapped inside a whale's vagina. I got it as far as my lips when my body said "no dice" and shot off a good two litres of pink vomit as an exclamation point—and I've gotta say, it actually tasted better in reverse.



Reviews: Edmonton International Film Festival

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Andrew Jenks, Room 335

During the summer of 2005, 19-year-old college student Andrew Jenks spent a month in an assisted living facility in Florida. Tailed by his two friends that recorded the whole event, Jenks ended up filming a documentary entitled *Andrew Jenks, Room 335*, a deeply emotional look at America's elderly and their lost voice.

The film follows Andrew's interaction with the residents of Harbor Place and his encounter with issues held by individuals 70 years his senior. From loneliness to dementia to death, Andrew seems constantly strained when it comes to understanding the lives of the residents—that is, until he realizes what they need: friendship.

Room 335 is filled with colourful characters that gradually open up to Andrew as they become more comfort with the cameras. Shown through weekly interviews, Jenks questions the residents about life, love and death. But the real star of the film is Andrew and his genuine interest in the residents' lives. He closes the generational gulf that exists between them and forms an amazing bond with a handful of his new roommates. It's surprising to see such authentic emotion in a film, let alone in one directed by a 19-year-old.

Overall, *Andrew Jenks, Room 335* is an entertaining and heartfelt documentary that attempts to peer into the lives of society's forgotten generation and succeeds on all accounts.

—Ryan Heise

Man Push Cart

Man Push Cart is not a film for the impatient or those with a short attention span. The story advances unhurriedly and untroubled, and director Ramin Bahrami callously disregards society's need for instant gratification. The movie follows the life of Ahmad

(Ahmad Razvi), who, everyday, wakes up, pushes his cart through Manhattan traffic in the dead of the night, sets up his coffee stand on his corner, sells grub, closes his stand and pushes his mobile prison back to its storage garage. A famous musician in Pakistan, Ahmad gave it all up to live with his wife in New York. Unfortunately, his wife dies and he's kept from seeing his precious son. To break up the isolation and monotony of his life, the entrance of Noemi (Leticia Dolera) and Mohammad (Charles Sandoval) allows for interesting relationships to ensue, and as a result, Ahmad's life starts to change for the better.

Though flush with absolutely breathtaking cinematography, poignant moments of human kindness and love, and hundreds of shots of Ahmad smoking a cigarette, the film fails to stir, the acting falls flat during some of the most important scenes, doing so at an exasperatingly slow pace.

—Bryan Saunders

Dark Arc

You might like *Dark Arc*. There's that small statistical possibility. You see, *Dark Arc* is a pretentious wank, and you need to be the type of person who likes films that are pretentious wanks. The main problem with *Dark Arc* is that it's written for the type of people who think that doing something like eliminating all of the outfits that aren't purely white or black from one's closet is a profound statement. And then it merges that pretentiousness with the production value of a student film.

The movie, which seems to have grown out of what should have been a five-minute film class project, relentlessly takes its characters too seriously. There are a few moments where the characters seem to be ready to set aside the artistic façades they had created for themselves and show some real emotional depth; but instead, they shy away and their pompous hot air is presented as some sort of deep examination of life. But hey, maybe I'm wrong; maybe you'll

find *Dark Arc*'s obsession with intense visual images intriguing and alluring, and maybe you'll be able to stand 99 minutes of people pontificating about them. I just know I didn't.

—Daniel Kaszor

Wristcutters: A Love Story

Wristcutters: A Love Story is probably the best romantic comedy ever made about people killing themselves. The fact that it's also, as far as I can tell, the only one, doesn't diminish the certainty that it's an enjoyable and surprisingly fun, if offbeat, movie.

The film stars Patrick Fugit (*Almost Famous*) as a distraught young man named Zia, who kills himself because his girlfriend cheats on him. Once dead, he finds out that people who commit suicide go to a world that's almost exactly like the one they left, only a little bit worse. In this rather depressing new existence, Zia finds friends in the extroverted, failed Russian rock star Eugene (Shea Whigham) and a girl named Mikal (Shannyn Sossamon) who claims to have been sent to the wrong place.

Together, they go on a road trip to find Zia's girlfriend, who also commits suicide, and find out that they have stronger bonds with each other than with anyone they ever met in life.

What makes *Wristcutters* work is that, despite the rather grim subject matter surrounding the story, and the melancholy setting filling every shot, the movie always has a fairly upbeat and fun air to it. Perhaps sending the message that suicide is painless isn't the best, but it definitely makes for a good movie.

—Daniel Kaszor

El Violin

Hope. Fear. Oppression. Music. It's a familiar list of themes, but writer-director Francisco Vargas handles them with startling clarity in the beautifully crafted Mexican film, *El Violin*. Gritty yet lyrical, disturbing yet hopeful, it at times feels awkward and uneven, but many of the scenes

shine. The film concentrates on a band of rebel farmers who've been run off their land by soldiers from the government. An elderly violinist named Plutarco (Don Angel Tavira), the father of the rebel leader, decides to risk it all to go back to the field where the group's much-needed supply of ammunition is hidden. In an odd twist of events, he ends up charming the captain of the soldiers camped by the village with his violin playing, and a daily game of wits begins.

El Violin almost feels like two different films in one: there's the side with the rebels and their struggle against an oppressive government; then there's the side with the likeable Plutarco and his clear-eyed vision. However, the weakness of the film lies in the fact that the two sides are very uneven—the latter part is undoubtedly the better-crafted one. Thus, it's hard to feel much empathy for any of the characters except Plutarco. It doesn't help that Tavira's performance is by far the best one here, and that the pace is flawed in the beginning.

Still, all of this hardly matters. The quiet beauty of the black and white cinematography, the aching sense of doom, the desperate fight for survival, the uplifting power of music: all these are superbly crafted, and you'll find it difficult not to fall into their simple grace and poignancy. You'll clutch at your seat with nervousness at certain scenes; you'll smile at the warmth and hope portrayed in others; you'll be completely silent during one of the most powerful finales in years.

In short, watch *El Violin*. You'll be touched ... and maybe you'll even learn something.

—Diana Song

L'Appel Des Arènes

For many North Americans, the word "wrestling" will likely conjure up images of trash-talking, spandex-wearing thugs who pound one another with metal chairs. But when watching the movie *L'Appel Des Arènes* (*Wrestling Grounds*), you'll see that wrestling can have profound cultural, spiritual and musical dimensions.

The film tells the story of Nalla (Abdoul Aziz Ndiaye), a young man who's introduced to wrestling by André (Moustapha Gueye) after being rescued from muggers. A parallel, yet somewhat less interesting storyline follows an unemployed man named Sony (Ibrahima Mbaye), who scalps tickets and gambles on the wrestling matches as a way to earn some money.

The movie demonstrates the interrelationship that exists between music and wrestling in this culture. Dancers and drummers perform at the start of all the matches, and the spiritual chanting of a shaman allows one wrestler to gain strength from his ancestors, who also wrestled. *L'Appel*'s greatest strength is its amazing soundtrack, which ranges from drumming to chanting to some modern music that's played in nightclubs. As an example, the most memorable and well-directed scene in the film depicts a group of barefooted wrestlers training on a beach. Their feet move in time to a pulsating drum beat, a powerful rhythm that probably echoes the beating of their hearts. The athletes' love for their sport confirms just how real their wrestling is.

—Maria Kotovych

Everything's Gone Green

"Everyone's in on a scam or creating something nobody really needs to sell to people who are too stupid to care or notice. Whatever happened to just being real? Why aren't we content to just be middle class?" So says Ryan, a likeable BC Lotteries employee on a quest for happiness and meaning in life before he hits 30. His quote does well to sum up the theme of this Canadian comedy, which explores just how far greed will take people. Paulo Costanzo, best known as Michael Tribbiani on NBC's ill-fated *Friends* spin-off *Joey*, plays Ryan.

Canadian novelist Douglas Coupland penned the script, his first effort made specifically for the screen. He sets the story in Vancouver, which provides the backdrop for a colourful set of comedic characters—like the Chinese-Canadian grandmother with an ever-

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showtimes

Andrew Jenks, Room 335	Tuesday, 3 October at 7pm in Empire City Centre
9 and Thursday, 5 October at 9:15pm at the Princess II	
The Ants	Saturday, 7 October at 2pm at the Garneau
Brothers of the Head	Tuesday, 3 October at 9:15pm in ECC 9
La Coupure	Wednesday, 4 October at 9:15pm in ECC 9
Dark Arc	Saturday, 7 October at 2pm at the Princess
Everything's Gone Green	Wednesday, 4 October at 7pm at the Garneau
Favela Rising	Friday, 6 October at 9:15pm at the Princess II
Half Nelson	Friday, 6 October at 7pm in ECC 9
In the Land of Milk and Money	Friday, 6 October at 11pm-6am at the Garneau
Interkosmos	Friday, 6 October at 11pm-6am at the Garneau
Invisible Waves	Friday, 6 October at 7pm at the Garneau
Last Stop for Paul	Friday, 6 October at 9:15pm in ECC 9
Love is Work	Thursday, 5 October at 7pm in ECC 9
Mad Cowgirl	Friday, 6 October at 11pm-6am at the Garneau
Man Push Cart	Friday, 6 October at 9:15pm at the Garneau
On The Bowery	Wednesday, 4 October at 9:15pm at the Garneau
Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles	Thursday, 5 October at 7pm at the Garneau
Rock The Bells	Friday, 6 October at 11pm-6am at the Garneau
Sidekick	Wednesday, 4 October at 9:15pm at the Princess II
Sunrise	Tuesday, 3 October at 7pm at the Garneau
Ten Canoes	Tuesday, 3 October at 9:15pm at the Garneau
Tzameti	Tuesday, 3 October at 9:15pm at the Princess II
Wrestling Grounds	Thursday, 5 October at 9:15pm at the Garneau
Wristcutters: A Love Story	Saturday, 7 October at 7pm in ECC 9

Empire City Centre 10200 - 102 Avenue NW
Garneau Theatre 8712 - 109 Street NW
Princess Theatres I and II 10337 - 82 Avenue NW

handy butcher knife, the never-ending stream of eccentric lottery winners and Ryan's pot-growing parent.

While the storyline is a bit thin and predictable at times, there's a certain charm and intelligence that pulls the film through. And if the images don't strike your fancy, the soundtrack should; it includes a delightful group of Canadian artists like Caribou, Final Fantasy and Jason Collett.

—Ryan Kenny

Unnatural and Accidental

If you're looking for a film that'll exercise your mind, then *Unnatural And Accidental* is definitely a movie you need to check out. Producer Carl Bessai takes a deep, dark angle in this film while examining several stereotypes that are placed on Aboriginals in today's society.

The first major plot line in the movie follows a young Aboriginal woman named Rebecca (Carmen Moore) as she wanders through the slums of a Canadian city in search of her mother. The second major component tells the story of a demented white male (Callum Keith Rennie) who gets a thrill out of killing Aboriginal women involved in the sex trade. The two storylines intersect when the man finds out about Rebecca's search, and befriends her with the end goal of luring her into his death trap.

Although the plot is fairly simple, the film switches from scene to scene in such a way that makes it difficult to follow at times. Still, the movie is very explicit in its portrayal of the problems faced by portions of the Aboriginal community. Alcoholism is in the forefront throughout the entirety of the film, as is prostitution. Along with very intriguing content, the director employs some very clever cinematography to catch the viewers' attention.

—Joel Tiedemann

Sidekick

At least once during our youth we dream of being a superhero—but of course we all grow up, get jobs and lose the heroic ambitions. This might

be for the best, though, as *Sidekick*, a Canadian-made film running at the festival, shows us that some people were never supposed to be heroes.

Beta-male Norman Neale (Mucci) is a comic-book obsessed computer technician who discovers that the office's popular rising star Victor (Ingram) has very slight telepathic powers. While his abilities—like catching falling coffee cups and being very good at baseball—are unimpressive, Norman is convinced that Victor could be developed into a powerful superhero, with Norman setting his sights on the role of loyal sidekick. But, as Victor's powers grow stronger under Norman's training, it becomes evident that he's more interested in money and fame than actually helping people. And, eventually, Victor begins to make the predictable shift from slight asshole to full-fledged villain.

Unlike the superhero schlock that Hollywood has been producing lately, *Sidekick* trades glitzy special effects for honest attempts at examining what real people would do in a world of comic book fantasy. Solid, but not amazing, the acting and adequate writing pretty much make up for the uneven, groan-inducing ending of the film, which most viewers will deduce halfway through. At the very least, it's a film that those with little interest in comic books can enjoy, but are unlikely to rave about. *Sidekick*, ironically, lives up to its name: it's solid, overlooked and entirely unremarkable. It's no hero of a movie, but it's not a loser, either.

—Scott Lilwall

Half Nelson

Half Nelson features Ryan Gosling as John Dunn, a drug-addicted teacher struggling to find purpose and meaning in his life. While Gosling's performance is honest, moving and very well portrayed, even the sight of his sexy body isn't enough to compensate for the dry plot that leaves you craving a hit of something interesting by the end.

The film aims to show the meaning-

lessness of a life on drugs and instead ends up tying itself into a confusing knot of vaguely connected plot points and undeveloped conflicts. If you're looking for a Ryan Gosling fix here, it might just be better to skip *Half Nelson* and rent *The Notebook*. At least that one's a cute story.

—Lacina Desjarlais

Brocket 99: Rockin' the Country

"*Brocket 99*," as anyone from Southern Alberta over the age of 20 can tell you, is an anonymously made tape from 1986 spoofing a would-be Native radio production that was furiously debated—and furiously copied—throughout the '90s, and, to a lesser extent, is still passed around today. The tape's creators haul out just about every native stereotype known to white man, whether offensive, funny, or as is most often the case, a little bit of both.

Enter *Brocket 99*, the movie. Director Nilesh C Patel and co toured around the province from Pincher Creek to Peace River and everywhere in between, gauging public opinion of the tape and its social significance in the film's trademark man-on-the-street interview style. They also intertwine segments of the tape throughout the movie, giving the uninitiated a first-hand listen to the controversial material. Not surprisingly, though, awareness of and reactions to the tape are stronger the closer you get to the real Brocket, a small town on a native reserve near Lethbridge. But 20 years after the tape's underground creation, this film raises some much-needed awareness for a younger generation of (film-fest-attending) Albertans.

As relevant and fascinating as public opinion on this matter may be, however, the film would be better off with less of the redundant, evasive and unsophisticated opinions garnered from the dozens upon dozens of average, middle-class white people that they encounter, and more from the academics, native leaders and Brocket denizens that are clearly more qualified to opine on the matter.

—Adam Gaumont

